A History of the Division of Graduate Education and Research

The Division of Graduate Education and Research was created in the summer of 2008. Chancellor Charlie Nelms created the Division by organizing under one unit the School of Graduate Studies, the Julius L. Chambers Biomedical/Biotechnology Research Institute, the Biomanufacturing Research Institute and Technology Enterprise, the Office of Sponsored Research and Programs, the Office of Contracts and Grants and the Office of Research Compliance. The purpose of organizing the various units was to ensure coordination and interaction as well as enhance graduate education and research. Its first Vice Chancellor is Dr. Hazell Reed, who was appointed to this position by Chancellor Charlie Nelms in November 2008.

The Vice Chancellor’s Office was originally located in the Hoey Administration Building but in the fall of 2009 moved to the Hubbard Totten Chemistry Building.

The Division of Graduate Education and Research is governed and managed by a Vice Chancellor, Dean, and five directors, and an Executive Assistant to the Vice Chancellor.

Mission

Driven by the premise that the University is in continuous pursuit of excellence, the mission of this Division is to provide the leadership strengthening and enhancing graduate education and research University-wide.

Goals

The goals for this Division are as follows:

- Expand support for graduate education throughout the University;
- Increase enrollment in graduate programs;
- Enhance the image of the University’s research and graduate programs;
- Expand collaboration and support among research institutes and centers;
- Increase the number of funded sponsored research proposals;
- Increase the number of funded research grants and contracts;
- Ensure University research compliance with federal regulations and legal restrictions.

Objectives

The Objectives for FY 2009/2010 are as follows:

- Maintain a positive working relationship with University personnel and the community;
- Employ a dean, School of Graduate Studies by July 1, 2010;
- Employ a Director for BBRI by July 1, 2010;
- Increase the research portfolio;
- Restructure the Office of Sponsored Research and Programs by July 1, 2010;
- Create and implement specific research guidelines that are consistent with Federal and State regulations by July 1, 2010.

SCHOOLS/INSTITUTES/DEPARTMENTS

School of Graduate Studies

The mission of the School of Graduate Studies is to provide graduate and professional education to NCCU students, which will prepare them for pursuing the doctoral degree, entrepreneurial opportunities, and other employment.

The goal of the School of Graduate Studies is to offer graduate degree programs that conform to the highest standards required by respective accrediting agencies.

The School of Graduate Studies works collaboratively with the:

- College of Behavioral and Social Sciences
- School of Business
- School of Education
- School of Law
- College of Liberal Arts
- School of Library and Information Sciences
- College of Science and Technology
The following degrees are offered:

- Juris Doctorate
- Master of Arts
- Master of Business Administration
- Master of Education
- Master of Information Sciences
- Master of Library Sciences
- Master of Music/Jazz Studies
- Master of Pharmaceutical Sciences
- Master of Public Administration
- Master of Science
- Master of Social Work

The Office of Graduate Studies is located in the Taylor-Education Building and the Interim Dean is Dr. Saundra DeLauder.

The Julius L. Chambers Biomedical/Biotechnology Research Institute

The mission of the Julius L. Chambers Biomedical/Biotechnology Research Institute (BBRI) is to conduct research focused on health issues that disproportionately affect African Americans and other minority groups and to provide students with research training and experiences that will enhance access to careers in the biomedical sciences.

To address this mission, the BBRI houses four Research Programs and five Core Facilities:

**Research Programs**
- Cancer
- Cardio-metabolic diseases
- Neuroscience
- Nutrition

**Shared Resources**
- Bioinformatics facilities
- Genotyping facilities
- Histopathology facilities
- InVivo Modeling facilities
- Zebrafish Core
Goals

The following goals have been established:

- Conduct research in key health disparities areas;
- Heighten community awareness of major health disparity issues;
- Increase minority participation in health disparities research;
- Attract additional academic/industry partners to assist with curriculum development, research training and community outreach.

The BBRI is an innovative research and training Institute dedicated to the advancement of fundamental knowledge of human diseases, particularly those that disproportionately affect under-represented minority groups. The BBRI is a $12 million state-of-the-art facility that provides 40,000 square feet of basic research space, which includes eleven modern research laboratories. Additional research support facilities include warm and cold rooms, cell culture laboratories, a histopathology facility, confocal microscopy suite, and computing and visualization laboratories. The BBRI is equipped with fiber optic wiring which connects every building on the NCCU campus.

The dedication ceremony for this facility occurred on September 2, 1999; it is named in honor of former NCCU Chancellor Julius L. Chambers.

BBRI is supported by NCCU and through a variety of other public and private sources. Investigator-initiated RO1 grants, cooperative agreements, and training grants with various federal agencies constitute the major sources of research and training funds. Through cooperative agreements and a strategic partnerships initiative, the Institute is also expanding its research and training activities in collaboration with other academic institutions, foundations, and private industries.

Dr. Kenneth Harewood was recruited to NCCU in 1998 to serve as the first director of BBRI. In that role he had shaped and defined the BBRI’s research mission and focus, assembled research teams targeting diseases that disproportionately affect minority populations, and forged partnerships with other universities, federal agencies, and industries. The current Interim Director is Dr. Faye Calhoun.

Biomanufacturing Research Institute and Technology Enterprise

The mission of the Biomanufacturing Research Institute and Technology Enterprise (BRITE) is to establish education and research programs which will prepare students with scientific competency and hands-on laboratory experience to pursue careers in the biotechnology industry; the programs are designed to create the new leaders in the next wave of amazing biotech discoveries.

BRITE Research Programs:

Drug Discovery
- Atherosclerosis
- Neurodegeneration
- Drug Design
- Diabetes Impact on Stroke
- Cancer

Drug Biomanufacturing
- Using plants as bioreactors
- Protein modification

Compound Library
- NCCU has a library of 410,000 compounds for evaluation for use in new drugs/drug discovery, which is the largest collection of any academic institution in the US
- Biogen Indec, Inc. donated 350,000 compounds valued at $3.5 million and NCCU/BRITE purchased an additional 60,000 compounds to create the library.
The Biomanufacturing Research Institute and Technology Enterprise (BRITE)

The 52,000 square foot state-of-the-art BRITE facility was founded by the Golden LEAF Foundation, Inc., which provided a grant of $20.1 million for construction of the facility. This new facility was completed in June 2008. The facility is equipped with $5.6 million in state-of-the-art laboratory equipment to support its academic and research programs. The majority of the funding is from annual state appropriation. The Golden LEAF Foundation has also provided an additional $1.5 million dollars to expand and upgrade the equipment.

The BRITE features 21,000 square feet of classroom and office space, as well as 31,000 square feet of laboratory space for faculty and students to conduct applied research in areas related to biomanufacturing and biotechnology. In addition there are common equipment rooms and core laboratories typical of those found in biotech companies – offering our students a chance to obtain hands-on experience prior to pursuing life science careers.

Students also benefit from the integration of this facility with NCCU’s existing Mary M. Townes Science Building which opened in 2005. Together, the BRITE and Townes buildings represent a $56 million investment in an 180,000 square foot science complex where future history-making scientists are training.

In November 2004, Chancellor James Ammons appointed Dr. Charles Pigeon, Interim Director of BRITE. Chancellor Ammons, on June 10, 2005, named Dr. Li- An Yeh, Director of BRITE.

On November 18, 2007, the NCCU Board of Trustees approved the name of this facility as The Golden LEAF BRITE Building, and it was officially dedicated on June 9, 2008.

Office of Sponsored Research and Programs

The mission of the office of Sponsored Research and Programs (OSRP) is to proactively facilitate the pre-award process and provide technical assistance to faculty and staff to ensure continuity in the submission of proposals for grants and contracts to potential funding agencies and organizations. The goal of the Office of Sponsored Research and Programs is to ensure 100% accuracy in the pre-award submission process.

The Office of Sponsored Research and Programs is located in the Lee Biology Building and its Director is Mrs. Edith Hubbard.
Contracts and Grants

The Office of Contracts and Grants is responsible for the financial and regulatory administration of all contracts and grants awarded to North Carolina Central University. This responsibility includes, but is not limited to:

- Establishing policies and procedures consistent with federal and state regulations;
- Determining the propriety and reasonableness of costs;
- Exercising budgetary control of contracts and grants;
- Preparing and submitting interim and final financial reports;
- Preparing periodic invoices and requests for funds;
- Maintaining an effective and auditable effort reporting system.

The mission of the Office of Contracts and Grants is to provide regulatory oversight, as well as complete, accurate, and timely financial information pertaining to contract and grant transactions to the University, funding agencies and other external stakeholders.

The goals of the Office of Contracts and Grants are:

- Streamline the establishment of accounts for new grants;
- Ensure 100% certification of Time & Effort Reports six weeks prior to the end of the semester;
- Meet periodically with principal investigators and program managers to ensure the fund burn rate is consistent with the grant award;
- Establish a system for monitoring subcontracts by July 1, 2010;
- Implement procedures and guidelines for spending and reporting the ARRA (stimulus) funds by January 1, 2010.

Highlights:

- College of Science and Technology – Sponsor – Howard Hughes Medical Institute – Amount awarded $864,225;
- College of Science and Technology – Sponsor – National Science Foundation – Amount Awarded $5,000,000;
- College of Science and Technology – Sponsor – National Aeronautics and Space Administration – Amount Awarded $5,000,000;

The office of Contracts and Grants is located in the Hoey Administration Building; its Director is Ms. Kathy Riggsbee.

Office of Research Compliance

The mission of the Office of Research Compliance (ORC) is to facilitate research excellence by advancing responsible conduct of research and laboratory safety.

Its purposes are to:

- Monitor all University research activities to ensure that they are conducted in complete agreement with relevant federal, state, and local policies and procedures;
- Address existing and potential hazards to compliance proactively in order to diminish University liability and protect those involved in and impacted by NCCU’s research;
- Support faculty, staff, and students with training and resources in order to establish an environment of accountability and research integrity while encouraging scientific exploration, innovation, and safety;
- Protect faculty, staff, and students reporting occurrences of noncompliance.

Office of Research Compliance Committees:

- Institutional Review Board/Human Subjects
- Animal Care and Use
- Misconduct in Science
- Radiation Safety
- Export Controls
- Technology Transfer

Challenges:

- Faculty Workloads;
- Start-up research funds for junior faculty;
- Laboratory/Research space;
- Timeliness of hiring process for researchers;
• Transition funding;
• Interdisciplinary collaborations;
• Graduate Assistantships/Fellowships;
• Indirect Cost Recover/Allocation.

Opportunities:
• Proactive marketing and recruitment of graduate students;
• On-line delivery of graduate education;
• Interdisciplinary, intra-disciplinary and external collaborations with other universities, businesses and industries internal and external to RTP;
• Enhancing the visibility of NCCU’s research programs;
• Pursuing funding for additional laboratory/research space;
• Integration of Kannapolis activities with those on campus;

The James M. Hubbard and Ezra Totton Building

The Office of Research Compliance is located in the Hubbard-Totten Building; its Director is Dr. Undi Hoffler.

Prepared by Hazell Reed, Ph.D.
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